

**HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM QUALITY REVIEW
HORRY COUNTY DSS
OCTOBER 2002**

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (Human Services Division) conducted a qualitative review of Horry County DSS beginning October 21, 2002. The review consisted of case record reviews, staff interviews, client contacts, and external stakeholder interviews. In this review, the external stakeholders interviewed were foster parents, the Guardian ad litem Program, Horry County School District and the Foster Care Review Board

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SAMPLE INFORMATION

Program under review	Referrals Not Accepted As CPS Reports	CPS Invest.	CPS Treat. Active	CPS Treat. Closed	Foster Care - Active	Foster Care - Closed	FHL	MTS	Adopt.
Case Population for Period Under Review	67	10	83	14	148	8	92	66	14
Cases Reviewed	10	10	10	5	8	4	8	5	4

The Measures and Output section of this report is based on the Child Welfare Outcome Measures Report that captures information off the CAPSS system as of 08/01/2002.

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MEASURES AND OUTPUTS

Outcome 1: Increase permanency for children in Foster Care (Safe and Stable Home for Every Child)

Measure	Source	County		State	
		#	%	#	%
Total Children in Care	CAPSS	161	100%	4993	100%
Children in care more than 12 months	CAPSS	64	39.75%	3110	62.29%
In care more than 12 months where permanency hearing has not been held	CAPSS	9	14.06%	823	26.46%
Children in care for whom permanency plan has not been achieved within 3/6 months after permanency planning hearing	CAPSS	Report under development			

Summary: Horry DSS has the structure in place to enable achievement of this outcome. They have addressed this issue in their 2002/2003 Self-Assessment. Among their goals is to ensure timely permanency hearings and timely completion of TPR documentation.

Outcome 2: Reduce Time in Foster Care to Adoption

Measure	County		State	
	#	Months	#	Months
Average number of months in foster care until adoption is final	5	21.48%	293	49.06
Average number of days/months in foster care after permanency planning hearing approves a plan of TPR or adoption for the child	Report under development			
Average number of days/months in foster care after TPR is granted	Report under development			

Summary: Horry DSS has identified methods to achieve this outcome. Their target is to reduce time in FC to Adoption to 20 months, reduce average number of months in FC after the Permanency Planning hearing approves TPR plan to 10 months and to reduce months in FC after TPR is granted to 9 months. Their plan to achieve this goal is outlined in their 2002/2003 Self-Assessment.

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Outcome 3: Improve Child Well-Being

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number and percentage of children and adolescents attending school and performing: passing grades, maintaining grade level, school readiness (1 st), truancy, suspensions/expulsions, literacy, diploma/GED, secondary education	In the cases reviewed where Foster Children were in school, we found that most were on grade level, and not exhibiting attendance or behavior problems.			
Number and percentage of children and adolescents who show physical and mental health is stable or improving (therapy, screenings)	In the cases reviewed, we found that all children identified with mental health or adjustment issues were actively receiving therapy or counseling.			
Number and percentage of children with substance abuse are stable or improving	In the cases reviewed, we found that no children were identified with substance abuse issues.			
Number and percentage of runaways	6	100.00%	107	100.00%
Number and percentage who age out of foster care and failed to meet goals	Report under development			
Number and percentage who become pregnant	From case file review and caseworker interviews, we noted one case of pregnancy.			
Number and percentage who are adjudicated for delinquency: once, more than once.	In the cases reviewed, we found no children currently involved with delinquency issues.			

Summary: Based on case reviews, children in foster care in Horry are receiving services to address any mental health or medical issues.

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Outcome 4: Reduce Time in Foster Care to Reunification Without Increasing Re-entry

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number and percentage of children who show physical and mental health stability and/or improvement	Based on our review Foster Care cases and caseworker interviews, all children were either receiving counseling or in a supportive placement which stabilized any physical or mental health conditions.			
Number and percentage of parents with substance abuse who are stable and/or improving	Report under development			
Average number of family/relative visits per child per month (parents, other relatives)	In the Foster Care cases where visitation was a part of the case plan, we noted frequent visitation occurring with family and/or relatives.			
Number of children who return to foster care after reunification within 12 months	0	N/A	22	6.96%

Summary: Our case review indicated that visitation occurred on a regular and planned basis. Children in foster care in Horry are receiving services to address any mental health or medical issues. According to the data, Horry is very successful in preventing children returning to foster care after reunification within 12 months.

Outcome 5: Reduce Placements of Young Children in Group Homes or Institutions (Federal Requirements)

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Percentage of children age 12 years and below placed in group homes or institutions	0	N/A	2384	100.00%

Summary: Horry DSS is taking the age of the child into consideration when arranging placements, by considering the availability of individual foster homes first.

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Outcome 6: Reduce/Prevent Abuse of Children in Foster Care

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number of children in foster care with substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff person	0	N/A	28	100%

Summary: Horry DSS has regular telephone and face-to-face contacts with foster parents by staff.. Visits with foster children are also clearly documenting an ongoing assessment of the child's safety. In their Self-Assessment Horry County DSS states they will continue to monitor and assess placements and enhance foster parent screening and training.

Outcome 7: Increase Stability of Placements and Other Aspects of Foster Children's Lives

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Percentage of children in foster care with more than two placements	21	13.04%	702	14.06%

Summary: The County has outlined steps to increase stability of foster children in their 2002/2003 self-assesment. These include recruiting more foster parents, maximizing sibling contacts and personal relationships and continuity of caseworkers.

Outcome 8: Increase Stability of Children's Lives

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Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Percentage of children who change schools/schools systems:	Of the children in Foster Care who are attending school:			
Once	Of the cases selected for review, several had changed school once as the result of placement			
More than once	Of the cases selected for review, one had changed school more than once as the result of placements.			
Percentage of cases with more than one change in foster care case workers	Of the cases reviewed, several had more than one change in foster care caseworkers.			

Summary: The documentation in the files reviewed did not directly address changes in schools or school districts, but review staff were able to determine from dictation those changes in schools that were recorded.

Outcome 9: Reduce/Prevent Abuse and Neglect of Children

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number and percentage of indicated cases of child abuse and/or neglect:	30	41.10%	516	36.96%
Among high-risk populations	Report under development			
Number of fatalities among children known to the agency	1	100.00%	13	100.00%

Summary: Horry DSS has identified the need to monitor intake decisions, monitor case decisions for thoroughness and accuracy, additional training for staff, providing public service information and training for community groups and referrals to treatment providers at the onset of assessments as ways to address this outcome.

Outcome 10: Reduce/Prevent Recurrence of Child Abuse and Neglect

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Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number and percentage of cases of children with 2 nd indicated report within 12 months of the 1 st indicated report	Report under development			
Number and percentage of cases of children with 2 nd indicated report within 12 months of reunification	0	N/A	24	10.80%

Summary: We noted that several cases reviewed did have prior CPS history, either of unfounded reports, active agency involvement, or not accepted at referrals.

**Outcome 11: Limit the Number of Abused and/or Neglected Children
Entering Foster Care to Those Who are Truly Endangered in
Their Home**

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number and percentage of children court ordered into placement	83	51.55%	4090	81.91%
Number and percentage of children placed informally (with relatives)	31	19.25%	364	7.29%
Number and percentage of treatment cases closed with risk reduced and treatment goals achieved (i.e. parents' and children's physical/mental health and safety improved)	15	12.82%	443	8.54%

Summary: Horry DSS used Safety Plans to ensure children's safety while in their own homes or when placed with relatives. In their 2002/2003 Self-Assessment Horry lists as a goal to increase the number of relative placements and provide more timely and appropriate referrals for treatment families as a means to achieve this goal.

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Outcome 12: Minimize Intrusion upon the Lives of Families and Children

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number and percentage of children and families, when asked, indicate/feel that the agency intruded in their lives:	In the interviews conducted, all interviewees felt that while they would prefer no involvement with the agency they understood why the agency was involved in their lives.			
Where services are provided (community based)	Interviews and case record reviews indicated the provision of services were usually available within the community but several providers had waiting lists for their services.			
How we deliver services (mutual planning)	In interviews and in case record reviews, planning was occurring in CPS and FC cases with service providers.			
When services are provided (convenient hours)	Case documentation indicated that it was possible to arrange convenient times for service to be provided.			
How clients were treated (respect and dignity)	Those interviewed reported that they were treated with respect.			
Number of days/weeks from achievement of treatment goals to case closure in treatment cases	Report under development			

Summary: Horry DSS did a good job of identifying and providing appropriate services to their clients. While clients were not always involved in their service plans, case planning with service providers was occurring. Horry has set the following goals as a means to achieve this outcome:

- Surveying at least 8 clients monthly to ask about services
- Maintain treatment closure to 10 days or less upon achieving goals.
- Decrease to 7 month treatment cases are open.

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Outcome 13: Increase Supply of Foster Home Placement Slots

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number of licensed foster homes	95	100%	1843	100%
Kinship care	Report under development			
Placements that fit	Report under development			
Close to home	Report under development			

Summary: Horry DSS has procedures in place to improve support to foster parents and to determine appropriate placements for children.

Outcome 14: Increase Number of Adoptions

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number of adoptions finalized	5	21.48%	293	49.06%

Summary: In their 2002/2003 Self-Assessment Horry lists several strategies that will be used to successfully achieve this outcome. They include timely completion of TPR documentation and increase the number of TPR successful hearings.

Outcome 15: Reduce Number of Disrupted Adoptions

Measure	County		State	
	#	%	#	%
Number of adoptions disrupted within 12 months of finalization	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Summary: No report available with this information.